

REMARKS

Claims 15-19 are pending in this application, and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Applicant's disclosure of the prior art (Fig. 15 and pages 3-4 of the instant specification) or Aida et al., when taken with Heidemann, (U.S. Patent No. 5,335,109).

Applicant respectfully disagrees with this rejection.

To the best of Applicant's understanding, the Examiner contends that since Heidemann "teaches the use of optical filters positioned downstream and upstream of an optical amplifier to block pump radiation having passed through the amplifier", (Office Action, page 3, lines 9-11), an optical filter from Heidemann positioned upstream of an optical amplifier may be combined with Fig. 15 to produce the present invention.

However, it is respectfully submitted that this is incorrect since the placing of an optical filter upstream of the optical amplifier, as disclosed in Heidemann, in Fig. 15 simply would result in the filter being placed on the optical fiber transmission path 1 in Fig. 15. There is no teaching in Heidemann to place the optical filter between the coupler 10 and photo diode 11 in Fig. 15, as claimed in claims 15-19, the coupler 10 being upstream of the optical fiber amplifier 2. The only optical coupler disclosed, taught or suggested anywhere in Heidemann is the pump coupler 5 which is downstream of the erbium-doped fiber 3.

In addition, Heidemann is directed towards greater control over the level of an electrical output signal produced by an optical to electric transducer. The use of filters upstream and downstream from the optical amplifier aid in achieving the greater control over electrical output since they absorb extraneous pump light from a pump source 4 that

controls the gain of the erbium-doped optical fiber amplifier 3. In contrast, the optical filter claimed herein is not directed towards gaining greater control over the optical and hence electrical output, but rather the optical filter claimed herein is directed towards ascertaining the level of the optical input.

Aida et al., in the words of the Examiner, discloses "signal input splitting and mounting so as to control pump power (see, inter alia, Fig. 1A)", (Office Action, page 3, lines 7-8), and, thus is not directed towards determining the level of the optical input, as is the invention claimed herein.

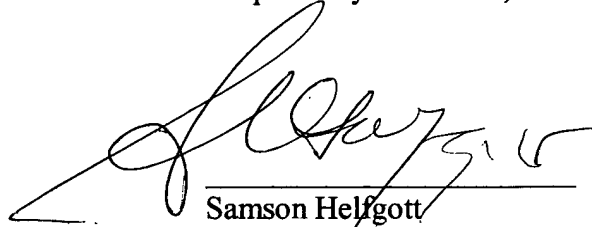
CLOSING

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 15-19 are in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited.

However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper, not fully covered by an enclosed check, may be charged on Deposit Account 08-1634.

Respectfully submitted,



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